

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MASERU 01459 011443Z

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FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6466

S E C R E T MASERU 1459

NODIS

FROM SCHAUFLE

DEPT PASS LAGOS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR XJ SF WA RH LT

SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH GARBA

REF: MASERU 1437

1. AFTER I HAD MADE CONFERENCE STATEMENT TAKING ISSUE WITH SOME OF NIGERIAN COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GARBA'S OPENING PUBLIC REMARKS TO WHICH HE MADE BRIEF REPLY, HE AND I MET FOR ONE HOUR CONVERSATION MOST OF WHICH WAS RELATIVELY AMICABLE REHASH OF PREVIOUS GROUND.

2. REGARDING HIS STATEMENT HERE I SAID THAT NIGERIAN PROTESTATIONS OF DESIRE FOR IMPROVED BILATERAL RELATIONS SEEMED SOMEWHAT INCONSISTENT WITH WHOLLY NEGATIVE TONE OF HIS STATEMENT. GARBA MAINTAINED STATEMENT SHOULD NOT BE VIEWED AS NEGATIVE BUT AS FRANK EXPRESSION NOT ONLY OF NIGERIAN VIEWS BUT, SINCE NIGERIA SPEAKS FOR AFRICA, AS WELL. I POINTED OUT HIGHLY CONTENTIOUS ASPECTS SUCH AS US INABILITY TO PUT PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA OVER NAMIBIAN QUESTION IN EXCHANGE FOR VORSTER'S HELP WITH RHODESIA AND "TALKS ON US-SAG DEFENSE AGREEMENT TO PROTECT CAPE ROUTE." I THINK MY POINT WAS UNDERSTOOD IF NOT EXPLICITLY ACCEPTED.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 MASERU 01459 011443Z

WM MAJOR SUBJECT OF CONVERSATION WAS NAMIBIA UPON WHICH GARBA

WAS NOT FULLY INFORMED SINCE HE WAS NOT PRESENT FOR CROSBY MEETING WITH OBASANJO AND NUJOMA. I WENT OVER POINTS WE HAD PREVIOUSLY COMMUNICATED IN SECRETARY'S MESSAGE TO OBASANJO. THEN, REVERTING TO GARBA'S PUBLIC INSISTENCE THAT USG COULD ACHIEVE INDEPENDENCE IN NAMIBIA WITHIN ONE YEAR, SAID THIS WAS MANIFESTLY IMPOSSIBLE.

3. GARBA MAINTAINED THAT IF USG PUT ADEQUATE PRESSURE ON SAG THIS COULD BE ACHIEVED. IN REPLY I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD HEARD THIS-OR SOMETHING LIKE IT-FOR SEVERAL YEARS. IT MIGHT BE USEFUL RHETORIC IN SLOW-MOVING OR STATIC SITUATION BUT WAS NOT REALISTIC OR APPLICABLE WHEN REAL PROCESS FOR CHANGE WAS GOING ON. US DID NOT HAVE KIND OF LEVERAGE WHICH HE SEEMED TO THINK WE HAD. WE ARE TALKING ABOUT A NEGOTIATING PROCESS-NOT CAPITULATION-AND NEGOTIATION BY DEFINITION MEANS MUTUAL CONCESSIONS. SAG HAD MADE SOME CONCESSIONS AND WE THOUGHT IT POSSIBLE TO GET OTHERS BUT WE NEED TO HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF WHAT SWAPO AND AFRICANS WILL AGREE TO.

3. GARBA MADE USUAL REFERENCES TO OAU AND UN RECOGNITION OF SWAPO AND PHONY TURNHALLER CONFERENCE. BUT MOSTLY HE STRESSED MORAL AND LEGAL ARGUMENT AGAINST CONTINUED SOUTH AFRICAN OCCUPATION OF NAMIBIA. I HAD THE FEELING, WHEN HE WAS FINISHED, THAT THIS WAS FOR THE RECORD.

4. WITHOUT TAKING ISSUE WITH HIS REMARKS I NOTED THAT WE WERE NOW TALKING ABOUT SETTLEMENT, WHICH I THOUGHT WOULD BE IN SWAPO INTEREST. SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT CAPITULATE BUT UNDER HEAVY US PRESSURE HAD DEMONSTRATED WILLINGNESS TO COMPROMISE. THEREFORE US HAD BEEN DOING WITH SOUTH AFRICA WHAT IT SAID IT WOULD AND WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE. WERE AFRICA AND NIGERIA, IN PARTICULAR, PREPARED TO DO THE SAME WITH SWAPO?

5. GARBA ANSWERED FIRMLY IN AFFIRMATIVE AND SEEMED TO DEMONSTRATE GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF PROCESS OF COMPROMISE WHICH IS NECESSARY TO GET FORWARD MOVEMENT.

6. COMMENT: I THINK WE MADE SOME HEADWAY WITH GARBA WHOSE INFLUENCE AT HOME, HOWEVER, IS STILL SOMEWHAT QUESTIONABLE. FOR WHATEVER ENLIGHTENMENT IT MAY HAVE PROVIDED THEM SOME
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MASERU 01459 011443Z

AMERICANS HERE, WHO ARE LESS THAN WILLING TO REPLY TO AFRICAN ATTACKS ON US, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT AWARE OF CONTENTS OUR BILATERAL MEETING, HAD OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS FACT THAT RESPONSE TO UNJUSTIFIED ATTACKS ON US CAN LEAD TO BETTER DIALOGUE THAN SIMPLY RECEIVING THEM IN SILENCE.

7. NIGERIAN AMBITIONS FOR AFRICAN LEADERSHIP BECOMING MORE AND MORE PRONOUNCED, TO EXTENT SOME AFRICANS HERE PRIVATELY REFER TO

NIGERIAN "IMPERIALISM" IN AFRICA. STOKES

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